

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ASUNCI 03785 152002Z
ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 3785

EXDIS

ARA FOR TODMAN ONLY, S/AB FOR BUNKER/POPPER ONLY, NSC FOR PASTOR ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PN, PA
SUBJ: REACTION TO PRESIDENTIAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON

REF: STATE 219477

1. PRESIDENT STROESSNER, HIS DELEGATION, AND TOP RANKING MILITARY AND CIVILIAN MEMBERS OF HIS GOVERNMENT ARE HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH HIS BILATERAL MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. ON HIS ARRIVAL BACK IN ASUNCION SEPTEMBER 9 STROESSNER TOLD ME HOW PARTICULARLY PLEASED HE WAS TO HAVE BEEN RECEIVED SO CORDIALLY BY PRESIDENT CARTER AND TO HAVE HAD SUCH AN EXTENSIVE CONVERSATION WITH HIM.

2. THIS VIEW HAS ALSO BEEN ECHOED TO ME AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE STAFF BY THE CABINET OFFICIALS AND OTHER HIGH RANKING MEMBERS OF THE GOP WHO ACCOMPANIED STROESSNER. MOST ARTICULATE IN EXPRESSING COMPLETE SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE VISIT HAVE BEEN FOREIGN MINISTER NOGUES, FINANCE MINISTER BARRIENTOS, CENTRAL BANK PRESIDENT ROMEO ACOSTA, AND PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER PAPPALARDO, WHO FOR MONTHS HAD BEEN ACTIVELY PRESSING STROSSNER TO AGREE TO PERMIT THE IAHR TO VISIT PARAGUAY, AND WHO ARE DELIGHTED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE BILATERAL MEETING IN THIS REGARD.

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3. THE MEDIA PLAYED STROESSNER'S VISIT AS A PERSONAL TRIUMPH, EMPHASIZING HIS SENIORITY AMONG VISITING CHIEFS OF STATE AND HIS PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT BY USG (REPORTED HERE INTER ALIA AS HIS BEING FIRST TO SEE THE PRESIDENT AND TO HAVE BEEN GRANTED THE LONGEST INTERVIEW). THE BILATERAL WAS REPORTED TO HAVE RESULTED IN A REAFFIRMATION OF U.S. WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE FULL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PARAGUAY. ALSO, THAT

STROESSNER HAD INVITED PRESIDENT CARTER TO OBSERVE THE 1978 ELECTIONS HERE. (THE OPPOSITION PRESS SEIZED ON THESE TWO POINTS TO QUESTION WHETHER THE U.S. HAD SOFTENED ITS HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND TO ASK RHETORICALLY WHAT THE U.S. COULD LEARN FROM THE FORTHCOMING REELECTION OF STROESSNER.)

4. ALL IN ALL, THE OVERALL EFFECT OF THE BILATERAL MEETING AND AFTERMATH AS SEEN HERE IS HIGHLY POSITIVE TO U.S.- PARAGUAYAN RELATIONS.
BRIGGS

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